15. (Amended) A computer storage medium having a configuration that represents data and instructions which will cause performance of method steps for caching and accessing rights in a distributed computing system, the method comprising the steps of:

accessing, by a software agent, a directory service, wherein the agent is located on a deputization point coupled to the directory service having the rights of at least one principal to at least one resource;

updating, by the agent, the rights to an access control list cache, wherein the access control list cache is coupled to the deputization point, and wherein the access control list cache is coupled to the principal;

receiving, at the access control list cache, a request from the principal for the rights;

retrieving, by the access control list cache, the rights; and

forwarding, to the principal, the rights.

REMARKS

Claims 1-22 are pending. Claims 1 and 15 have been amended and marked-up versions of the amended claims are attached pursuant to 37 CFR 1.121.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1-22 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,178,510 to O'Conner et al. (O'Conner) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,157,953 to Chang et al. (Chang). As the PTO provides in MPEP § 2143, "[t]o establish a prima facie case of obviousness, ... the prior art reference (or references when combined) must teach or suggest all the claim limitations." Furthermore, under MPEP § 2142, "[i]f the examiner does not produce a prima facie case, the applicant is under no obligation to submit evidence of nonobviousness." It is submitted that the Office action does not factually support a prima facie case of obviousness based on O'Conner and Chang for the following reasons.

Claim 1, as amended, recites a method for caching and accessing rights in a distributed computing system. The method comprises accessing a directory service by

2